

Route 2: Eden Church Trail Ullswater and surrounding villages



Starting Point: Penrith

The first benefactor of Penrith was Bishop Strickland, commemorated in many a place name in the area. Not only was he known for his religious endeavours, but also as a provider of water for the town. Thacka Beck is beside Penrith TIC and Museum. Concerned mill owners upstream ingeniously suggested that the eye of a millstone would be a suitable gauge to limit the water being drawn off from the river!



Barton (7): With its fine Norman tower, this ancient Church was once a 'Minister', or place of teaching. The ancient parish covered a large area, illustrated in 1150 by a chapelry built and dedicated to St Patrick in Patterdale.

Martindale (8): Originally part of the ancient parish of Barton. Martindale now has two churches: the first you see is Victorian and the second is a 17th century treasure at the end of the scenic dale. Surviving without alteration, even electricity, it contains a Roman altar as its font. People from Patterdale had to be taken “over the hill” for burial here.

Dacre (9): The ancient picturesque parish of Dacre has had a church on this site for over a thousand years, and was once the location of a Northumbrian Monastery mentioned by Bede. In the Church, two shafts of ancient crosses still survive, one of which is pre-Viking. It is said they illustrate Adam and Eve (man’s fall) and the sacrifice of Isaac.

Penruddock (10): Thought to be the third oldest Presbyterian Church in England, and dated 1654, this is now a United Reformed Church. The village became Puritan under the Rectors of Greystoke. The Reverend Anthony Sleigh (or Slee, 1634-1702), went from here to Edinburgh, and returned to minister all his life. He was twice placed in Carlisle dungeon for praying with prisoners.

Greystoke (11): St Kentigern and St Cuthbert both preached at Greystoke in the 7th Century. The Church, dating from 1382, was richly endowed (being second in status only to the Cathedral). As a collegiate foundation, it was a centre for learning. In the church were six Chantry chapels where priests offered a life of prayer for the dead. Clergy were again trained here from 1958 to 1979 when 90 men passed through the small college. The figure of Christ, by Josephine da Vasconcellos, was inspired by the words of Jesus to the ‘good thief’: "Today, thou shalt be with me in paradise."

Mosedale (12): In this tiny community on the edge of the Northern Lake District fells, can be found the Mosedale Meeting House, one of the oldest Quaker meeting places in the County. The Meeting House, originally an open sided barn, was used by the Quaker “Seekers” as an isolated place to meet away from persecution. Later, given to the Religious Society of Friends, and dated 1702, the building was enclosed and the roof supported by two pillars, possibly Roman.

Glenridding (13): The village is unusual for having a Roman Catholic Church, and a new one at that. The Chapel was established by a community of priests with a special concern for the welfare of young people. The focal point of the ministry is pastoral care and outreach to those who came here on holiday.



Patterdale (14): The dale is named after St Patrick who led a life of prayer and preaching in the 5th Century. Beside the road is a rebuilt well in which it is said that he baptised new converts to the Christian faith. A large embroidery in St Patrick’s Church is appropriate for an area with more sheep than people: it depicts Jesus, the Good Shepherd looking after his sheep.

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